



# ABAG

ASSOCIATION  
OF  
BAY AREA  
GOVERNMENTS

# 1975

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Last year, officials of the Association of Bay Area Governments said they hoped the then-proposed 1975-76 ABAG budget would be the last the agency would ever need.

The reason for this hope was a feeling that the State Legislature would finally pass a bill bringing to the San Francisco Bay Area a truly comprehensive regional planning body, in which ABAG would join with other existing regional agencies.

*next day*

The plan didn't work in 1975, and may not in the near future.

Although the Senate declined to adopt a bill by Assemblyman John Knox to consolidate ABAG, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Bay Area Sewage Services Agency, midway through the year ABAG got a chance to bring together the planning work of several regional agencies.

## ***Environmental planning***

Responsibilities for environmental management — which would have been almost the exclusive task of the Bay Area Planning Agency proposed by Knox's AB 625 — were assigned to ABAG through Section

208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972.

In May the State Water Resources Control Board designated ABAG as the areawide waste management planning agency for the Bay Area under Section 208. The following month ABAG was awarded \$4.3 million in Federal funds by the Environmental Protection Agency.

corridors. As part of ABAG's joint program with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, a major study of regional land use development and transportation issues along the San Mateo Coast was completed in 1975 — the first of the series of corridor evaluations.

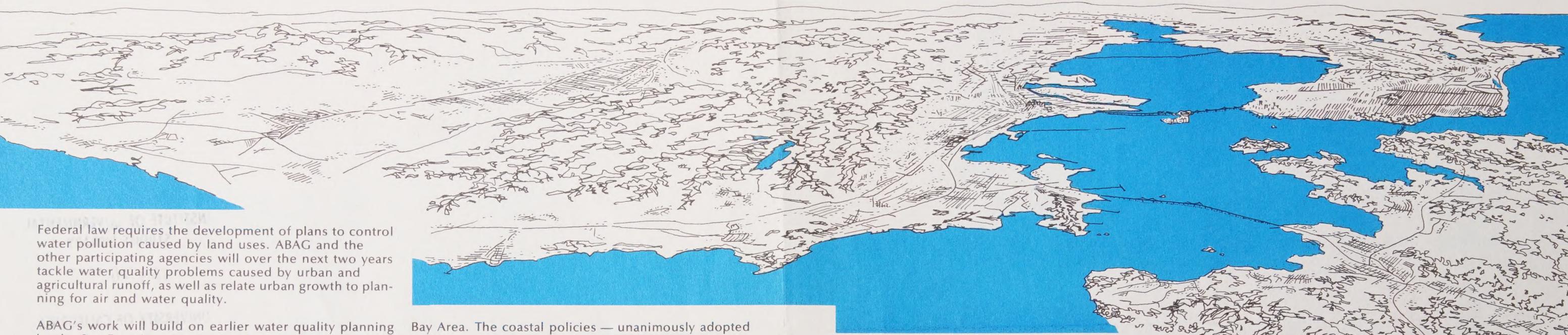
The San Mateo corridor study developed detailed recommendations and policies for a major subregion of the

quality, balanced urban development and cooperative government action. Large-scale developments such as that proposed for Las Positas should occur in central parts of the region with existing — but unused — public service capacities, the board said.

In undertaking a review as that for Las Positas, a voluntary association of local governments such as ABAG

Health, Education and Welfare, the program is concentrating on county-level management and regional coordination of emergency medical services such as ambulances, hospitals and public safety agencies. Most of the grant funds are being used to develop county-level EMS Programs.

ABAG acted last year to automate its project notification



Federal law requires the development of plans to control water pollution caused by land uses. ABAG and the other participating agencies will over the next two years tackle water quality problems caused by urban and agricultural runoff, as well as relate urban growth to planning for air and water quality.

ABAG's work will build on earlier water quality planning by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Bay Area Sewage Services Agency and others. The agencies — as well as local governments in the Bay Area — will cooperate in the 208 planning process.

Other regional agencies — such as the Bay Area Air Pollution Control District and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission — with a concern for air quality efforts will also participate. Air quality maintenance planning — also a regional responsibility — must be linked to plans for water quality and for management of urban growth for environmental management to succeed.

The designation of ABAG as the 208 planning agency represented a high degree of confidence on the part of EPA and the State in ABAG's ability to devise a system for cleaning up the region's waters and air for the next generation of residents.

ABAG helped inspire this confidence during the year by concentrating a great deal of attention on environmental quality and development issues affecting the future of the Bay Area.

These included the development of major land use and transportation policies for the San Mateo coast, the approval of Phase I of the Regional Housing Element and the work of a system of hearing panels to provide early review of regionally significant developments.

The Bay Area has thirteen land use and transportation

Bay Area. The coastal policies — unanimously adopted by ABAG's Executive Board — will guide decisions about public investment in water and wastewater facilities, the degree to which sensitive environmental resources need protection and the degree to which major proposed developments are consistent with regional policies. MTC will be considering the transportation policies in 1976.

The successful completion of the San Mateo coast corridor evaluation led the ABAG/MTC Joint Policy Committee to prepare for its second corridor study — for the Santa Clara Valley.

### **Review of Las Positas 'new town'**

Another example of ABAG's work in formulating specific recommendations on developments in the region has been the system of hearing panels to provide early review of regionally significant proposals.

Created in 1973, the hearing panel process involves the appointment of local elected officials to recommend whether ABAG should review major proposals in their early stages.

Using this process, the Regional Planning Committee appointed a hearing panel to review the Las Positas new town proposed for development north of Livermore in Alameda County. In April — after a full-scale review by the committee — the Executive Board concluded that the proposed new community is premature and substantially conflicts with regional policies on environmental

runs substantial risks that a member government may be offended by establishing an agency position early.

Recognizing this risk, the Bay Area Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration in June cited ABAG for "achievement in public administration."

"This innovation creates a new arena for the people in the formative stages of major projects to understand and help shape the direction of the region as a whole," the ASPA awards jury said. The Las Positas review "is a good example of how this responsive innovation serves to ensure an early and searching forum in identifying the critical environmental and urban development problems that must be faced in assuring a high quality development."

### **Approval of housing element**

Another significant achievement in 1975 was Executive Board approval of Phase I of the Regional Housing Element, containing important regional policies to be used in reviewing local applications for Federal Housing and Community Development Act funds. During the coming year, ABAG will refine and further develop the policies of Phase I and recommend how they can be implemented.

Another accomplishment during 1975 was a \$450,000 grant to ABAG to develop a regional emergency medical services system. Funded by the U.S. Department of

system for Federal grants covered by Circular A-95 of the Federal Office of Management and Budget. The automation was a response to the number of Federal programs requiring review by ABAG. This number has increased in recent years to 157, and the monthly average of projects has increased to 98. For the fiscal year ending June 30, the Executive Board reviewed 1,022 Federal grant applications.

### **Library automation project**

Computer networks that would allow a person in a local library to get information from a university library or the State library miles away may be a part of the future for Bay Area libraries. In 1975, ABAG began a library automation project to learn how Bay Area libraries are using advanced computer technology and automation as a necessary step in achieving a library network. Data processing equipment and services aid nearly every area of library operations, while new ones are being devised, studied and implemented. The growth of data processing has left library planners considering automation with an extensive yet confusing array of systems and services.

ABAG's automation technology clearinghouse will provide library planners with current information on existing new and developing automation tools. ABAG will also develop a way to formally include library

planning issues in the regional planning process.

ABAG last year completed the major portion of a land capability study that will enable Bay Area jurisdictions to use geologic publications more effectively. The land capability study covered a large area of Santa Clara County where intense pressure for development is occurring in an area with the most critical earth-science problems.

The study developed a method to assess and reduce expected dollar costs of earth science



phenomena such as earthquakes, flooding, slope stability and resource depletion. The method was designed for use by local governments in addition to those in the Santa Clara County study area.

Throughout the year ABAG's Department of Technical Services provided detailed census information and services to member governments, businesses and citizens. ABAG also co-sponsored with the U.S. Department of Commerce and others workshops on the 1980 Census and to promote applications by local governmental officials of geographically based census computer programs.

ABAG formed a Projections Technical Advisory Committee to help resolve technical questions on the next phase of the ABAG/MTC land use, employment and population



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projections. The importance of the committee's effort is underlined by the increasing reliance on these population projections for State and Federal funding programs.

Last year the agency made significant progress in the field of human services. In addition to the programs in emergency medical services, ABAG worked closely with the League of California Cities and the County Supervisors Association of California in the second year of a "capacity building" partnership to improve local planning and delivery of human services. A newly appointed capacity building task force will guide ABAG's efforts in the project. By June 1976, the task force will recommend to the Regional Planning Committee and Executive Board future

ABAG human service roles and services to member governments.

Another part of human services planning was ABAG's co-sponsorship of a series of manpower roundtables to assist major local governments in programs funded by the Federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act.

In 1975, ABAG's Citizen Alliance Program — through which established citizen groups can apply for staff assistance for projects on issues of regional significance — was highly successful in reaching new constituents not previously involved in regional planning.

The program is just one way that ABAG reaches out to citizens for participation in dealing with issues that affect them — both directly and indirectly. For ultimately it is the Bay Area's citizens — of today and tomorrow — that ABAG and its member governments serve.

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